

La Mirada - Working to ensure our veterans receive the recognition and honor they so deserve, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez presented service medals to Richard Alvarez and Richard Mariot, at the Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 9148 in La Mirada on Friday night. Both men served our country in the Vietnam War and now reside in the city of Whittier.

“During their tours of duty, these two young men served their nation with distinction and honor. We now have the opportunity to recognize the sacrifices and accomplishments they made on behalf of our country,” said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez.

The Office of Congresswoman Linda Sánchez worked together with the officials at the National Personnel Records Center, in the Department of Defense to secure the proper commendations for these veterans.

Richard Mariot grew up in El Monte and served in the United States Army from August of 1967 to November of 1969. While in the service he attained the rank of Sergeant. Mariot served as a Scout Dog Handler, guiding reconnaissance and mine detection missions with his trusted canine companion. Sánchez awarded Mariot the following medals:

- The Bronze Star
- The Purple Heart
- The Army Commendation Medal
- The National Defense Service Medal
- The Vietnam Service Medal and Bronze Star Attachment
- The Combat Infantryman Badge 1st Award
- The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon with Device
- The Marksman Badge and Rifle Badge

At the end of his service, Mariot was injured and moved from hospital to hospital. Some of his medals never caught up to him. Mariot is still an active member of the Combat Infantryman's Association.

Richard Alvarez grew up in East Los Angeles and served in the United States Army as a Private from February 1971 to May of 1974. Alvarez is the current commander of VFW Post 9148 and 1st Sergeant of the Combat Infantryman's Association. He is also a member of the 1st Calvary Division. At the end of his service, the situation in Vietnam was hectic and marked by confusion. Alvarez headed home and did not receive all his medals before he left the service. Sánchez awarded Alvarez the following medals:

- The Air Medal
- The National Defense Service Medal
- The Vietnam Service Medal and Bronze Star Attachment
- The Combat Infantryman Badge 1st Award
- The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon and Device
- The Expert Badge and Grenade Bar
- The Sharpshooter Badge and Rifle Bar
- The Marksman Badge and Pistol Bar

Congresswoman Linda Sánchez gave brief remarks and awarded each veteran their respective medals during a dinner ceremony at the VFW Post 9148. The friends and family of Alvarez and Mariot and members of the VFW attended the ceremony.

“It is important to honor and support our service men and women who have put themselves in harms way, and not to forget those men and women who continue risk their lives on a daily basis to ensure our safety, security, and freedom,” said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez.